

Craighead Environmental Research Institute

Monthly Progress Report: February 2010

for the Montana Department of Transportation and Western
Transportation Institute

Bozeman Pass Wildlife Monitoring

MSU banner number 426899

1 February 2010 – 28 February 2010

Task 1: Road Kill Surveys during February 2010

Road kill surveys were conducted on both sides of I-90 from Bozeman to Jackson Creek and back for a total of 22 miles round trip and 1 hour of labor per survey. Twelve (12) road kill surveys were driven during February 2010. Seven (7) of those recorded no new road kill. This equals 264 miles driven in February for this subcontract. Totals of animals killed between Bozeman and Livingston were:

Bozeman Pass Road kill Totals	February
Species	Number
Badger	0
Beaver	0
Blue grouse	0
Bobcat	0
Bird Spp.	0
Black Bear	0
Cowbird	0
Coyote	0
Crow	0
Deer species	2
Dog	0
Domestic cat	0
Elk	0
Great Horned Owl	0
Ground Squirrel	0
Harrier	0
Hungarian (Gray) Partridge	1
Jackrabbit	0
Long-eared Owl	0
Magpie	1

Mallard	0
Marmot	0
Meadowlark	0
Mink	0
Moose	0
Mountain lion	0
Mule Deer	1
Pheasant	0
Pigeon	0
Porcupine	0
Rabbit	2
Raven	0
Red-tailed hawk	0
Raccoon	0
Robin	0
Red Fox	0
Ruffed Grouse	0
Snowshoe Hare	0
Skunk	2
Small mammal spp.	0
Weasel	0
White Tail Deer	2

Task 2: Track bed monitoring at the MRL Bridge in February 2010

No track bed sessions were completed in February. Snow and cold temperatures prohibited surveys.

Task 3: Photo monitoring at fence ends through February 2010

Fence-end cameras were not downloaded in February.

Task 4: Photo monitoring at jumpouts through February 2010

Jumpout cameras were downloaded on 10 February. The NE jumpout camera recorded 1 magpie event. The SE jumpout camera recorded 12 magpie events and one deer walking along the bottom of the jumpout. The NW and SW jumpout cameras recorded no animal events.

Task 5: Track bed monitoring at fence ends, jumpouts through February 2010

Fence end and jumpout trackbeds were monitored occasionally in February 4 but no tracks were observed.

Task 6: Photo monitoring of culverts February 2010

The main culvert cameras were not downloaded in February. The farm tunnels at MP 311, 329.1 and 329.8 were not downloaded in February.

Task 7: Opportunistic snow tracking at track bed, fence ends, jumpouts, and along the Interstate in February 2010.

After a continued long period of cold weather with little snow there were distinct tracks and some obvious trails crossing the highway at the eastern end of Bozeman. Distinct 'trails' were observed crossing at MP 309.6 and 309.8 near the campground on the North side of the Interstate. On Feb. 15 and March 1 white-tailed deer were killed crossing on those trails. A remote camera was positioned to record deer on the trail at MP 309.6 on Feb. 20. Deer were recorded using the trail South of I-90 during dark, early morning hours on 2-22, 2-23, 2-24, and 3-1. White-tailed deer were found as roadkill in the near vicinity on 2-22 and 3-1.

Task 8: Data Management & Reporting in February 2010

Data entry and summary required 2 hours during February.

Discussion:

A long period of cold weather during February seems to have reduced animal movements, and thus roadkill. The high number of deer tracks crossing I-90 at the east end of Bozeman, as well as the continued high rate of roadkill in this area (in comparison with the rest of the study area) indicates that this could be an effective site for wildlife fencing. In the brief period that a camera has been in place at MP 309.6 two (2) white-tailed deer have been killed nearby. So far in 2010 seven (7) white tailed deer have been killed between MP 309.6 and 310.6 indicating that this is a relatively high use area for deer during deep snow cover.

An invoice was submitted with this report for February expenses and activities totaling **\$635.84**. Currently the cumulative total billed to this project is **\$37,767.78**.